MEMORANDUM TO THE PRESIDENT:

I am advised this date by the Department of State that they have received a letter dated 20 November 1943, addressed to the Secretary of State, from A. G. Ciampi, Archbishop of Lodz, Apostolic Delegate in Washington. A copy of this letter is enclosed. I am forwarding a copy of this letter to General MacArthur.

In view of this message from the Pope, it is my opinion that the entire matter should be given consideration before any of the death sentences are carried out.

As stated in my previous memorandum of 23 November, forwarded to you by Mr. Forrestal, any effective action on your part would probably require the concurrent action of other interested nations.

Kenneth O. Norris
Secretary of the Army

Encl.

KGNorris
Washington, D. C.,
20 November 1949

My dear Mr. Secretary:

At the request of the Secretariat of State of Vatican City, I wish to present an appeal from His Holiness, Pope Pius XII, in behalf of those prominent Japanese, especially the former President, Kokutō Hirota, who have recently been condemned to death by the International Military Tribunal of the Far East.

It is the earnest hope of the Holy Father that the American Occupation Authority in Japan will consider commuting the sentences of these men. If the extreme penalty of death be commuted, the justice decreed by the court will still be safeguarded and the supernatural spirit of Christian charity will shine forth in the darkness and sorrow of the present world desolation. Such an act of clemency would have a salutary effect upon the peoples of the Far East and would go down in history as a manifestation of Christ-like mercy on the part of the representatives of a great nation and as a proof of Christian civilization.

I shall be deeply appreciative of any consideration that may be given to this appeal of His Holiness and I shall be particularly grateful if it can be made known to the Commander of the Occupation Forces in Japan, General Douglas MacArthur.

(Closing paragraph (formality) omitted from quotation)

/s/ A. G. Cicognani
Archbishop of Leonisa
Apostolic Delegate

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MEMORANDUM FOR THE SECRETARY OF THE ARMY

2 December 1948

The President handed me your memorandum of
28 November which has to do with continuation of sentences
for the Japanese officials condemned to death.

The President directed me to advise you that
he has decided to take no action in this matter whatsoever.

HARRY H. VAUGHAN
Mater General, U. S. Army (Ret)
Military Aide to the President

Memorable Kenneth C. Royall
Secretary of the Army
Department of the Army
Washington 25, D. C.